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# THE GATEWAY



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## Some Thoughts on Educational Reform in Canada.

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The problem of Education is the problem of life; a discussion of the aims of one is necessarily an examination of the ideals of the other. Hence it is to the ideals of Canadian life, both individual and corporate, that we must look for guidance in our educational theory and practice; by these we must evaluate our organizations, by these we should gauge the direction and extent of reforms. It frequently happens, however, that we are able to profit by the experiences of countries in which the conditions of life are similar to our own. It is because of the community of ideals in Canada and Scotland, that of all the overseas races which have co-operated to build up that cosmogony which we call Canadian "society," no one has made greater or more vital contributions than has the Scottish. And Scotland has made this contribution, not by a wholesale transfer of organizations, but through individual men and women, graduates of Scottish universities, who have organized or profoundly influenced our institutions for higher learning. I need but mention Peterson, Falconer and Murray as typical Scotsmen who have directed the course of social evolution in Canada, through the training of leaders.

There have been numerous attempts to explain, in terms of national psychology, the reasons for the Scotsman's ability to organize and crystallize thought; a few have

tried to show why Canada has attracted so many of the best brains and stoutest hearts from Auld Scotia; but the explanations always seem less cogent than the facts. The facts are that Sandy McDonald, whether from the glens of Argyllshire or the fertile valleys of the Forth and Tweed, usually becomes a constructive factor in Canadian national life. The facility with which this adaptation is made evidences, I believe, an identity of national standards, interests and aims. Because of this, I venture to suggest to readers of "The Gateway" that Scotland's experiences in educational effort merit careful study by Canadian educators. No one of us is satisfied with the organization or the curriculum of our schools; no one of us would suggest that we had reached an adequate solution of our problems. But if we must make reforms, let us make them with all caution, profiting alike by the failures and successes of other countries, and weighing the probable applicability of their solutions to our own needs.

I would be understood to say, not that Scotland has the best educational system in the world, but that her position is secure, because her leaders know their weaknesses. The principal of a large Normal College said to the writer only last year: "We are quite aware that since the closing years of the Victorian era, education in Scotland has been lagging behind that of England. But



the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918 is so much superior to the Education (England) Act that we think it will not be long before the point of focus shifts from London to Edinburgh." I want to state, briefly, a few criticisms of Canadian education, and to indicate the direction in which I believe reform lies. My criticisms are made with the Scottish educational organization as a mental background; my suggestions are more strictly applicable to the eastern provinces, but will, in part at least, be of general interest.

The first need in Canadian education is a clear concept of the meaning of education. One of the most marked characteristics of Canadian educators is their conservatism; more tenaciously than any other group have they held to the Disciplinary conception of education. Here and there are found men and women who are willing to let the Classics and Higher Mathematics stand or fall on their own merits—but the majority of our teachers are convinced that these subjects impart some mysterious general "mental power" not acquired from the study of history or civics. Familiarity with any recent psychological experiments should have persuaded educators of the fallacy of "faculty" psychology. Scottish educators recognize and contend that Latin and Greek should be retained for some students, because of their content-value, or because they are basic to some other study, or because of their intrinsic worth; they have long since ceased to talk of "mental power" acquired by the grinding out of meaningless translations.

I venture that the concept of education which is most suited to the Canadian populace, i.e., which most adequately interprets its ideals, is the pragmatic one of Professor Dewey: "Education is a freeing of individual capacity in activity direct-

ed to ends of social worth." In this concept we should note:

(a) That the main factor in education is the child.

(b) That the second factor of vital importance is the society into which that child is born, and of which he must become an integral part.

(c) That educational organizations should secure the interaction of these two factors; should lead the child to interpret society.

(d) That education is activity, not discipline, and should aim to make the child a self-controlled member of society.

(e) That neither are all children created equal, nor is it in the power of the school to secure equality.

(f) That the principle which controls educational effort should be, "To each according to his need, from each according to his capacity."

(g) "That it is the business and duty of the State to see that the means for all kinds of education are fully and efficiently provided, and that these are so distributed as to be readily accessible to all."

(h) "That whenever any obstacle exists which hinders the full benefit of the education furnished being received by the child, and provided that the obstacle is such that it cannot be removed by the parent without permanently lowering his own social efficiency, then it ought to be removed by and at the expense of the community."

This is virtually the program outlined by Knox in his "First Book of Discipline" hundreds of years ago; it is a concept toward which democratic Scotland has been working ever since. This is the program which seems most adequate for Canada; in fact, we are coming to recognize that it is not only desirable but necessary. To this end we must see that all take advantage of the opportunities offered, so that not only



shall the "eldest sounis and airis of all barounis and freholdaris that ar of substance" secure a good education; not only shall no father be permitted "to use his children at his awin fantasie, especiallie in their youthheade," but that fathers and sons shall be satisfied that the sacrifices are worth the effort, and that society supports them in their endeavors to make use of all advantages offered.

This leads, naturally, to the next criticism: Those teachers who have abandoned the disciplinary conception of education, have proposed an encyclopaedic ideal of education. With the emphasis placed on content-value these extremists have decided that Milton's Tractate of Education is the law for the Medes and Persians alike. The inevitable result is that students come from the hands of such teachers with a mere smattering of a great many things; a knowledge of little or nothing. In Scotland no such dissipation of effort is allowed. Pupils of secondary schools take not more than four or five subjects in each year, but the standard of attainment is very high. Between these two faulty ideals, the practice of Scotland seems to indicate a middle path. Let us enquire what principle shall govern our selection of subjects from the great mass available.

It has been assumed that what people have needed and desired is an education that will enable their sons and daughters to pass from the class of craftsmen into the professional classes. This idea of education as a kind of ladder by which our boys and girls may rise from one

class to another has come to dominate in our aim, thus leading to the neglect of the many. What is an education that will enable children in any group to do efficiently the particular work in their own station in life, to find and fill that particular niche in which he can make the greatest contribution to society? **No fixed curriculum for all the schools will solve the problem of individual needs.** It follows that no central board of education can decide the special needs of each locality and that much more must be left to the initiative of local school boards, who shall seek the advice and assistance of the inspector and teachers. The central power should prescribe only a minimum, or at most outline the work which is common to all schools. To make a practical application: Vocational education will prove a bane rather than a blessing, if the central authorities define strictly, or minutely, the course of instruction to be given, or the hours to be allotted to such work.

It will be objected, quite fairly, that many of our school boards, and many of our teachers, are quite unable to outline or prescribe a course of instruction. This serves to accentuate what seems to be another pressing need—we need much more highly trained teachers. Canadian teachers are inefficient, if at all, because of lack of training, rather than lack of initiative, or ability, or effort. The day of the jack-of-all-trades seems to have passed in every other profession and trade but that of teaching. In the not distant future we must stop training "teachers" and start to train "kindergarten

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teachers," "high school teachers;" specialists in infant, elementary, academic, mental defective work. I am quite aware that many will oppose this statement, as outlining a program too closely allied to that of that we are aiming to make of the school an "educational factory." But I am convinced that the increased knowledge of mental life, which experimental psychology has gained, will make it imperative that a teacher specialize in pre-adolescent, adolescent, or post-adolescent work. Nor is this the ultimate stage of specialization. Within every phase of psychological development, or at any rate in the third stage, there must be a narrowing of effort, similar to that which now prevails in university work. For many years the general practitioner will be needed in our teaching service for rural districts, but the specialist has come to stay in urban centres.

It is a mooted question with educators as to the best distribution of professional training and practical experience. In Canada the former usually precedes the latter. In Scotland a pupil-teacher system has been tried with indifferent success. By this method, students in the higher classes, who intend to become teachers, give two hours per week to classroom instruction, in the lower grades, under the supervision of skilled teachers. Thus they have several hundred hours of practical experience before they enter Normal College. For various reasons the method has not worked well, and will probably be abandoned in a short time. One difficulty is that the pupil-teachers are required to decide at too early an age for the teaching profession; a second arises from the differentiation of pupils in a single-room country school. In Scotland the solution will probably be found by requiring prospective teachers to spend some time as whole-time assistants, after completing the regular

secondary course, and before entering Normal College. This is a suggestion for a possible solution of the problem in Canada.

This means that we must spend more money on the training of our teachers. The question of "who pays" is a practical one which should be considered. Three sources may be mentioned; the local school boards may be asked to bear part of the burden, as in Scotland, the central authority paying part; or the central authority may pay all the expenses; or the student may be required to pay tuition, board, etc. To adopt this last course would be to renounce a part of our assumed obligations. It would place the teacher on exactly the same level as every other professional man; a step which would not be without its compensations. But in Canada, today, we still regard teaching as a more or less meritorious self-sacrifice, and the low standard required of those who practise pedagogy, as compared with those who practise law or medicine allows us to regard the teacher as a public **servant** rather than a master or leader. The teachers cannot blame the public for this attitude. They have accepted what no other profession has accepted; in a special way they belong to the public. Meanwhile the scarcity of teachers makes it imperative that special inducements be offered young men and women to enter the profession.

Local school boards are not inclined to make any contribution to the training of teachers (and very little to their salaries, after they have been trained!!) Provincial treasuries feel the drain on local resources. One of two alternatives is presented. Either some bold provincial authority shall raise the required amount by taxation, or the Dominion government shall be obliged to set aside part of its revenue for education. Already precedents have been established for this,



and I venture the prophecy that more and more, the central government will find it imperative to aid the provinces in this matter. The matter of educational finance is now a vexed question between the East and the West, and one can hardly predict the outcome. We must recognize that "education" means more than it used to; grants must be made not only for the furtherance of elementary and high school training, but our university must come more within the reach of the poor man's son; further, adult education is needed both for our own citizens, and for those new Canadians who come in such numbers within our gates.

Such expenditures must be a direct charge on the State; private donors cannot be expected to support our universities. The pious benefactor has been the pride of Canada as the Choregus was the pride of Athens. The building and endowment of schools and universities, where the young may receive whatever share of the intellectual wealth they are capable of using, has always been regarded as praiseworthy, as long as this liberal education was given at the cost of departed donors. There is, however, a very strong prejudice against permitting it to be provided at the cost of the nation at large. The Adolescent Act of Ontario (1921) is a piece of legislation which deserves the highest praise in that it recognizes that the State has assumed responsibility for education, and declares that the State will perform its task well.

There are other suggestions for Canadian educational reform which come to one as he meets Scottish teachers and enquires into the factors that secure the high degree of efficiency, so characteristic of Scottish schools, but I have not the space to enlarge on them. Some of these practises, such as student government on the playground; the "direct" method of instruction in the

teaching of modern languages; full-time use of the educational plant, are now found in our best schools. The educational programs of such voluntary agencies as the Workers' Educational Association has no counterpart in Canada, but some such organization could do valuable work in any industrial centre. The place which shall be allotted to music and gymnastics must be considered in almost every province in Canada. In the absence of anything approximating to a "natural" religion, Canadian educators must continue to refuse direct religious instruction in our schools.

I cannot hope that these disjointed remarks will contribute much to the problem of social reconstruction which faces Canadian educators. That task is stupendous. At best they might serve to make a few more readers more sensitive to the problems of education, even as they are now sensitive to injustice and to social evils, are intolerant of profiteering, and repelled by the horrors of war. Professor Patrick in his new book, "The Psychology of Social Reconstruction," contends that this "sensitiveness" to our needs is the peculiar characteristic of our own day, and that it is in this awareness of weakness that our strength is to be found. "So far as we can see at present," he says, "the era of intelligent control lies far in the future, and the control which is to mark the twentieth century will spring from an impulsive idealism, characterized by a keen sensitiveness to our present social evils, rather than by a comprehensive grasp of the whole situation." There is no doubt that the situation in Western Europe "is the kind of situation in which former civilizations have gone down." It is also true that the greatest danger of modern civilization is "decadence—physical, mental and moral"—and that if we are to remodel our social

(Continued on page 24)

## Thoughts on the Russian Revolution.

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The Russian Revolution is an epoch, perhaps the greatest, in modern history. Some have likened it to the break-up of the Roman world and called the French Revolution a mere tempest in a teapot. For France was only one, if the leading one, of the various states of Western Europe. The Russian Empire, with a population seven times that of France in 1789 and a distinct political and religious system, is comparable to the whole of Western Europe. So the great convulsion in that empire may be giving birth to a new group of completely independent nations—though there is some question of this. The French Revolution affected primarily France. The repercussions beyond her frontier were relatively small and even in France the break with the past was not nearly so great as was once supposed. The Russian Revolution, however, may change our whole western civilization. On this point most are agreed, but there the agreement stops. Those who possess treasure and are possessed by fears see the red doom of our civilization stalking westward, while those who are burdened with little property or fear acclaim the rising of a new day.

But while there may be these differences there is a broad parallel between the French and Russian Revolutions which makes the latter less of an enigma. We have nearly forgotten the delight with which the Russian Revolution was hailed in its early days. So it was with the French Revolution and for similar reasons. Then England was moved with joy

because France promised to follow her example in adopting a free constitution, and the Americans too, were carried away by the subtlest form of flattery—imitation. On the continent the delight was inspired by a grosser, more conscious selfishness of France, the great and powerful state that overshadowed her neighbors, was stricken with a disease that would weaken her for a long time, if not fatally. Then came disillusionment which turned praises into curses. There were very few like Charles James Fox, who refused to join in the common hue and cry. The “corresponding societies” which were in communication with Paris were regarded as dealers in sedition if not treason. No name was too bad for the terrible monster that devoured her own children and tore through the bars of international law. For many an anxious year after the battle of Waterloo the spectre of revolution haunted men’s minds. Some likened it to a volcano that might at any time burst through the thin crust of society and destroy everything. Has it not been much the same today? The allied countries and the central powers found their first point of agreement since 1914 in praising the outbreak in Petrograd. The Russian autocracy was an awkward burden upon the allied conscience and the Russian army a menace to the Teutonic body. The same revulsion of feeling quickly followed. Now the word Bolshevism has a terrible, barbarous sound, an evil magic. It is an ominous word of hate and dread that conjures up



all sorts of wild imaginings. The word "Revolution" a century ago played exactly the same useful part of scarecrow. Just in proportion as men felt sure they knew what was happening in France they were ignorant of the true nature of the Revolution. And so one may harbor the suspicion that they who talk most loudly of Bolshevism know least about it. Indeed, many a delirious denunciator of Bolshevism is the very worst Bolshevik, according to his own vague definition—the application of force to those who disagree—a *reductio ad absurdum* that should give us pause. The mis-interpretation of the French Revolution that was current at the time in the outside world suggests that we are similarly blind and that the wisest reading of the Russian Revolution is perhaps through the spectacles of the French Revolution.

The great paradox of the French Revolution was the intimate conjunction of an ethereal idealism with a crass materialism. It exalted the best and debased the worst in men. This was incomprehensible at the time but seems reasonable now because we have discerned the two driving forces, theory and violence.

The intellectual ferment which was working throughout the Eighteenth century has more than a passing semblance to the intellectual unrest in Russia during the last two generations. By the principle of inertia, human customs and institutions have tended to outlive their justification, sometimes by a long period. Society, as a result, has at times reached a state of unstable equilibrium. The more this is so the greater the explosion produced by the least disturbance or strain. The whole social and governmental system of France was so outworn that the intellectuals of the day could see no good in it. They turned to construct the edifice *de novo* and spun all manner of theories. Except for the

brilliant Turgot, they were unable to put them to the test of experience, and so they lived in the thin atmosphere of Utopia and scorned the wisdom of the ages. Traditions were blind, there was no light of reason in them. The past was thoroughly bad, or, to quote Lord Acton, "a warning rather than an example." Men were essentially good and equal. Peel off the outer crust, individual conditions of living, and there remained a simple abstract man amenable to reason and actuated by good wholesome motives. Truth was eternal, universal and simple, therefore easy to apply. Their abstract reforms based on such truth must work well because man was a healthy angel imprisoned in the flesh of the unhealthy past. All this is startlingly like the doctrines of the Russian anarchists of the last century. They preached that all social evils, from poverty to crimes of passion, were due to the restraints imposed upon society, such as the institutions of private property and marriage. We had been going for centuries in the wrong direction, repressing rather than expressing human nature. Some years ago Mackenzie Wallace was told by a (supposedly very young) Russian revolutionary that Russia needed the mere application of biological laws to society. When Wallace maliciously asked him what biological laws he would apply he could think of none. When Wallace, with added malice then asked what biological laws he could not apply, the Russian was completely nonplussed. Wallace's mentality was not native to Russian soil. It was more annoying than contagious. Another feature of "the principles of 1789" was the method of applying them by simple decree, for the government was all powerful. This is the common error of amateur reformers, even moral reformers, who regard the government as the lever of some machine for turning out a string of perfect

human sausages. Lenine's ideas follow the same channel. At the general congress of peasants, November 17, 1917, he said: "If socialism can be realized only through the intellectual development of all, we will not see socialism for five hundred years. The advanced elements of socialism must drag on the mass and not be stopped because the mentality of the people is not what it should be. We must lead the masses by using the soviets as an instrument to force the revolution." This attitude is quite natural if we remember the background of the Russian autocracy and the absolutism of the old Bourbon monarchy.

The mob is the other, the material driving force of revolutions. In France on the eve of the Revolution the spirit of the people contained elements of explosion. There was little or no education among the masses. Ideas were crude and wild legends easily gained currency. Here and there frequent panics were blown up by the cry, "The bandits are coming!" The attitude of the common people toward their superiors was suspicious and inclined to insolence. Bands of outlaws appeared all over the country and streamed Parisward to swell the proletariat there suffering from an unusually hard winter. The popular sympathy with these outlaws betrayed that organized society was on the point of dissolution. The dregs of society were rising to the surface. The force of repression was dissolving, the government was impotent and the morale of the army was crumbling. In France there survived two powers, theory and brute force. In Russia the ignorance of the masses is hardly conceivable to western minds. In the height of the war there were peasants who did not know the difference between France and Germany, who thought England was a woman in distress. They had one thought, one passion—the land.

Ever since Catherine the Great remitted the feudal obligations of the nobles to the crown, the peasants have cherished the tradition that she also decreed their relief from servile dues and the grant of all the land to them. The division of the soil between the lords and the peasants in the emancipation of half a century ago did not kill this belief. It only whetted the peasants' appetite for the rest of the land. Here we have one explosive force. The industrial revolution, which occurred on the continent in the Nineteenth century, created a large proletariat in the few Russian cities. The combined population of Petrograd and Moscow on the eve of the war was about three million. Finally the war produced a gigantic potential mob. The era of national armies, ushered in by Napoleon, has not well agreed with Russia, for a national army is a useless or dangerous instrument unless the government is broadly expressive of the national instinct. This lack of harmony has been obvious in Russia ever since the Crimean war. It required but a slight shock to destroy the spell of discipline and transform the army of considerably over ten million into a vast mob concentrated here and there.

It was the fusion of these two elements, theory and force, that produced the terrible momentum of the French and the Russian Revolutions. It appeared in the very beginning. The storming of the Bastille was the work of the lawless mob of Paris, not of heroic, organized revolutionaries. The educated people whose heart was set on reform had been in daily dread of such an outburst of anarchy and had formed the National Guard to prevent it. At the same time they felt balked by the stupid royal government at Versailles which had just dismissed Necker. But suddenly their whole attitude changed and they acted a mighty lie. They were



just too late to check the rising of the mob but were quick to see the great shock it gave to the reactionary court. So they pretended it was their own doing and gloried in that which a few hours before they had abhorred. "Liberty was smirched from the first moment of her birth." In Russia several political groups had long sought the establishment of constitutional government. But of themselves they had no power. The lack of provisions in Petrograd, and the consequent bread riots beginning March, 1917, supplied the force they lacked. The old government fell and the provisional government arose. Those who reaped the victory had not won it. Just as over a century before, a few powerless reformers appropriated the work of anarchy.

From this point of union the development of revolutions is inevitably toward the Right. Idealism by degrees becomes fanaticism and force the rule of government. Restraining tradition is paralyzed by the initial shock and the mob prefers the extremist. The revolutionary of one day becomes the reactionary of the next. In France, Mirabeau, Danton and Robespierre followed rapidly one after the other and in Russia, Prince Lvoff, Kerensky and Lenine. The pure idealism of both Revolutions bred a religious enthusiasm, a spiritual fever. The new Trinity, "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" born in France, was capable of regenerating the whole world. With true missionary zeal, the sons of France carried their new Gospel to the dark lands beyond their frontier. They had this advantage over Christian missionaries that the Heaven they promised lay in no uncertain regions beyond death. They issued proclamations urging other peoples to revolt and offered the aid of French arms to all who accepted the invitation. Those who would not were to be treated as enemies. This expansive character of the French

Revolution is reproduced in its Russian counterpart. Bolshevism is as truly a religion and would convert the world. Its emissaries carry their propaganda to foreign lands just as sincerely as the French of old or as Christian missionaries of any age. The subversive teaching of the French agents threatened existing society and government, and stirred up a reaction and even hostility without. The consequent persecution only intensified revolutionary fanaticism. Even so it is with the Russians.

Nothing can be so cruel as exalted enthusiasm, unless it be the mob. The mob always has a preference for the more violent, and force once loosed cannot be controlled. In France as in Russia, some leaders tried to ride the storm but others others blew it up to a greater pitch of fury. Of the latter, certain were high idealists who played upon the vulgar passions of the mob to effect their reforms, while others were mere demagogues seeking power and plunder. Just as hypocrisy is a tribute to virtue, so in time of great disorder, criminal violence batters upon idealism. Hence the enigma of both Revolutions. To force unchained, was wedded fanaticism with all its cruelty, and then the armed invasion of the foreigner threatening a return of the old regime made them furious and pitiless. The Terror was the natural offspring of these enraged parents. The earlier French revolutionaries were men of words, not of deeds, and so they were hurried off the stage until finally the Jacobins, men of action, controlling an efficient political machine, erected violence into a system of government. They numbered only 300,000 in a population of 26,000,000, yet France was at their awful mercy. Worthless paper money flooded the country, a vigorous censorship kept opinion in a straight-jacket, the peasants' crops were commandeered

forcibly and mere suspicion sent many heads rolling. Russia has followed in the same Death's Dance. The Cadets and the earlier socialists were quite incapable. They were paralyzed except for their tongues when the day called for a strong hand. Anet, an eye-witness who has just published "*La Révolution Russe*," though personally acquainted and very sympathetic with Krensky, writes of him, "Words, words, words!" On the other hand, while an enemy of the Bolsheviks, he admits them to be the first of the revolutionaries to have a genius for action. They understood the meaning of Napoleon's saying that you can do anything with bayonets except sit on them. The Bolsheviks with their soviets are the Jacobins with their clubs. There is the same paper money, the same censorship, the same appropriation of crops and the same sacrifice of life. The Bolsheviks are a small minority. Their strength lies in three things: their fanaticism, their use of force, and last but not

least, patriotism roused by the hostility of foreign powers.

The outcome will be different and yet the same. Europe is too exhausted by war and infected by the germs of Bolshevism to undertake a coalition which would provide an opportunity for a Russian Napoleon. The inevitable reaction will only come in another way. The criminal will slink back into his dive and the fanatic's fires will die. It may be consoling to some to realize that "the principles of 1789" did not conquer all Europe and that much of the world, even that which pays lip service, is yet heathen. But Christianity has leavened the earth and the French Revolution was not strangled in Napoleon's arms. So will it be with Bolshevism. The peasant in Russia as in France will retain the land and perhaps regain his old religion and the workman will not again become the slave of the machine he tends.

A. L. BURT.

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## THE COMMUNITY PLAYERS.

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The present season sees the establishment of the repertory theatre in Canada, in the form of two strong and competent organizations. The two great Canadian Universities of Toronto and McGill have come to the aid of unsyndicated drama, and the Hart House Theatre in Toronto, and the Community Players in Montreal, are in the midst of their seasons. These companies of clever amateurs are out to find a rock upon which to build the Canadian Theatre, and this highly ambitious and praiseworthy object gives their efforts more than local interest. The work

of the Hart House Players Club has been described in the December number of the *Canadian Bookman*, together with their articles of faith and expectations. The Community Players have just finished their second series of presentations, and an opinion upon their success might prove interesting.

As a not new but unfamiliar institution, the repertory theatre demands definition. It came out of William Morris, much as the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood came out of Botticelli, by a sort of parenthood once removed. In the latter case,



Ruskin was the midwife; in the former, a group of sparkling Celts with ambitions for the glories of Erse. The aim of the repertory theatre in all countries is to found the truly national drama. This is their own little idiocyncrasy, and Heaven knows that in most cases it is most allowable. In the case of the pioneers of the movement, Lady Gregory and her rare following succeeded in resuscitating the national drama, fortunately not in Erse; there is no more potent form of mental invigoration in the world today than the work of the Irish school. In Great Britain, the movement brought out a flock of clever craftsmen, who ranged time and eternity in search of the stark and the new; Shakespeare was rejuvenated in the Elizabethan vernacular, and the centuries gave up their dead, sometimes their very dead, drama for the world to look upon once more. Best of all, Granville Barker came forward to do famous things with black and white paint, and over in Germany Bäckst began his decorative orgy. So that while the tendency in the repertory theatre has been to allow its cleverness to run it into the ground, it has made a distinct contribution to the progress as well as to the pleasure of nations, and its appearance in Canada is certainly to be welcomed. It creates oases in the desert of theatrical mass-production; and it is pleasing to know, that in both Canadian organizations, a financial subsidy will keep the well bubbling without flavoring the water. They mean to smell out the Canadian playwrights, and both schedules call for a definite number of all-Canadian plays. The writer had the pleasure of seeing the first of these some time ago, when "Squirrels," a Canadian comedy by J. E. H. Hoare of Montreal, opened the second series of the year in the new theatre of that city.

"Squirrels" was rather a neat bit

of work. It was composed of two episodes through which the plot appeared and unravelled, the necessary cement of talkiness that goes with restricted action, together with a despicable anti-climatic curlicue at the finish. (The Washington Square Players stole this latter trick from O. Henry, and worked it to death, and the poor old thing suffers in its resurrection in Canadian drama). There was a considerable skill shown in equipping the dialogue with telling lines, and the dilemma developed in the first half dozen sentences, so that there was no reason to suspect a claque when the audience gave it a hearty hand. After all, comedy is certainly not bound to be convincing. But like ninety-nine per cent of the artistic produce of Canada, it left the fundamental want unfilled. There was nothing Canadian about it. It was somewhat Montreal-ly, through the aid of local allusions a la vaudeville, but one felt rather sorry for Montreal, for the atmosphere of the play was composed of about equal parts of English snob-bishness and American bad manners. Mr. Hoare may be right in assuming that there are the two most characteristic stresses upon our Canadian social life, but it is to be regretted that he failed to create anything approaching a Canadian situation out of them. On the other hand, who expects creation in the course of a half hour family wrangle? It is only fair to state that Mr. Hoare is indefatigable in his services with the Community Players, and his subsequent work should be watched, as there may have been more ink in his pen than "Squirrels" shows. The episode of the suitcase was jolly good fun, and the title episode might have been equally joyous under different treatment.

The other parts of the program proved that the Community Players were up to snuff, no matter what their vehicle might be. "The Little

Stone House," a Russian offering out of an English dramatist, was finished in a surprising degree. All the accessories of coloratura realism were there; an eternity ticking clock, an old man awaiting death, a blue moon and vast wickedness. Russia would seem to be the last refuge of the bloody-minded authors; long after the sawmill and snowstorm scenes have passed into Sennett comedies, butchery seems right and proper if only it is done in Russia. But the work of the caste was outstanding and superb, and the tension never broke until near the end, when only a very experienced actress could have carried it further. "Glittering Gates" was also delightful. The unforgettable lines of that gorgeous bit, such as "One who dwelt in our midst," and "Blooming great stars," were handled with prideful understanding. The scenes of the sentimental burglar, with his old nutcracker biting through the gates of Heaven, is a gem, and the caste polished every available facet. Their work was even more remarkable through their success against an un-

imaginative and unconvincing setting. So the evening with the Community Players was as cold water jetted upon the skin; it was not so much intellectual as stimulative, but stimulant in these dull times is a very great thing.

The audience was at least half as interesting as the play. There was more than a sprinkling of business suits among the dinner dress of the subscribers, which is as it should be. And the audience laughed occasionally at the wrong time—another healthy sign. And in all, it will be worth while to watch the progress of this clever band of artists. The Canadian Corps was the first great manifestation of a national identity. The "Dumbells" are indisputably Canadian, and there are at least three novels in the current season that could not be mistaken for the work of either Englishmen or Americans. Perhaps the national drama will bud vigorously through Hart House Theatre and the Community Players. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished

G. R. STEVENS.

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## "THE GROUP OF SEVEN."

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Visitors to the Exhibition of Pictures and Prints in the Convocation Hall will be struck by the original quality of the sketches of the "group of seven." Those familiar with the R.C.A. and O.S.A. recognise in these works a new and vigorous conception of landscape art, strangely out of harmony with academic ideas. And those only will appreciate this quality who realize that there is in Canadian art a hundred years of traditional ideas and methods, borrowed from French, Dutch and (most of

all, as we should expect) English art, so that it is always possible to say of a Canadian artist that his style is derived from that of some European master. The "Group of Seven" seeks to break from such traditions. They claim that climate and atmosphere give the distinctive quality to the Canadian landscape, and that these must be expressed in a distinctive way. The leading spirit of the group is Lieut. A. Y. Jackson, who takes up again, after his three years with the Canadian forces in



France and Belgium, the plea for a frank method of artistic expression undeterred by tradition. Writing about an exhibition similar to this in 1913 Mr. Jackson stated: "There was no attempt to found a school or secede from the art bodies. There was, moreover, nothing revolutionary about our ideas. We felt there was a rich field for landscape motives in the north country, and we frankly abandoned an attempt after liberal painting, and treated our subjects with the freedom of the decorative designer just as the Swedes had done, living in a land with a topography and climate similar to our own. We tried to emphasize color, line and pattern even if need be at the sacrifice of atmospheric qualities." This claim for aesthetic freedom has been made by every age in which traditional rules and academic authority have held sway, and Mr. Jackson's statement is a rather curious echo of the manifesto of Edward Manet in the catalogue of a great impressionist exhibition fifty years ago: "The artist does not say to you today, 'Come and see flawless works,' but 'Come and see sincere works.' It is the effect of sincerity to give to a painter's works a character which makes them resemble a protest, whereas the painter has only thought of rendering his impressions." In both cases emphasis is laid on a change from the highly elaborated studio picture to direct straightforward painting in face of nature, when the impression is vivid and when color therefore has fervour and richness.

It is in this spirit that the work of the Group of Seven is to be appreciated. If the drawing is faulty it is because that has been sacrificed to the accentuation of some color-quality or harmony of tone. It is not accidental that the group has gone to Northern Ontario. In these pristine wilds subject (so-called) was not important, and the character of

the landscape was suited to this direct unsophisticated style. These sketches do not attempt to provide a topographical account of Northern Ontario, or to be a substitute for photographs to illustrate some magazine article, but they should arouse in us a kind of lyrical feeling such as we may have while listening to music—a sense of beauty which the sight of a glowing landscape inspires.

The prevalence of magazine illustrations, the habit of viewing pictures by certain conventional standards propagated in interminable treatises on art, the laudation and social weight of academies render the sympathetic approval to such new and original work very difficult. When the children in the last act of the "Blue Bird" tell their parents of their adventures in the Seen-unseen the mother says at once, "They're ill; fetch a doctor."

Work such as that of the Group of Seven is frequently regarded as a coarse clamor for popularity. The reversal is the case. One must insist on their sincerity. They are as much in earnest as if they were building a railway or prospecting for oil, and it is quite certain that they do not dream of fortunes. It requires no little courage for a group of men to take such a defiant stand. Anyone who is acquainted with painting and picture-buyers knows that our collectors favor the artists of every country but our own, or of those amongst us who are good investments; but to paint with this fearless sincerity is to put oneself outside the pale of the buying public. The Group of Seven is repeating the experience of their great French predecessors of fifty years ago. Manet, one of the foremost of them, wrote in 1875:

"I went to see Claude Monet this morning. I found him altogether 'hard up.' He asked me if I knew of a purchaser for ten or twenty of

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his pictures at £20 each. Shall we take it on? I thought of a dealer or of an amateur, but there I foresee the possibility of refusals."

It seems absurd to add that twenty years later one of these—the great "Bridge at Argenteuil," described as the most gorgeous color-poem ever painted, brought (but not to Monet) £4300, and is now of course much more valuable. The case is by no means exceptional. In fact, the whole history of the French impressionistic movement indicates the difficulty of assessing even the artistic value of such work as we have now on view. Canadian artists suffer the additional disadvantage of competing with every species of foreign art product. In a recent account of the treasures of one of Canada's collectors there were the names of Turner, L'Avery, Harman Phillips, Cotman, Guardi, Van Ostade, de Koninck, Morris, Fantin-Letour, Monticelli, Bloasuers, Weissenbrach, not to mention Japanese prints and Chinese pottery. One looked in vain for F. H. Varley for A. Y. Jackson, for Tom Thomson, for Jim MacDonald. Yet the acquisition of the finest Turner (and our collectors seldom get near that) would not help Canadian art nearly so much as the support and encouragement of one of these artists, whose work has not only been acknowledged in the National Gallery at Ottawa, but has already aroused interest outside of Canada and is shortly to form the subject of a review in the foremost art journal, "The Studio." A competent critic in Toronto compares Varley with Orpen, Augustus John, and Sargent, and Varley has only been painting for a few years. His work is in portraiture, and it is to be hoped that Edmonton will give us soon the opportunity of seeing its quality. The same critic said of one of A. Y. Jackson's pictures in the Canadian War Memorials Exhibition: "This must be one of the most



enduring pictures in the exhibition. It stands in point of technique somewhere between the extremists and the moderates, avoiding the pitfalls of the former and the timidities of the latter. . . . An unusual picture in which the art is happy and the treatment uncompromising."

Such comments should keep us from regarding the work of the Group of Seven (as we are rather apt to do) as the casual revolt of inexperienced faddists. They are, on the contrary, the deliberate effort of men practised in the craftsmanship of art to get away from copying, to get rid of niggling, to put aside tradition, and to bring into Canadian art the element of nationality. It is not easy, on a first acquaintance (especially for those who have not seen the effects on recent European art of French impressionists, the Newlyn school, the Glasgow school, and the Munich sessionists) to realize that in these sketches we have the germ of whatever will be vital in the Canadian art of tomorrow.

Everyone interested in art will look forward hopefully to see the effect of this awakening. In the building up of a nation spiritual as well as material forces are at work. In these sketches the subtle influence of a spiritual force is manifested, working towards a greater love of natural beauty and so towards the fashioning of a higher patriotism.



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**EXTRACT FROM MR. ROWELL'S  
ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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---

Under our constitution, political sovereignty is vested in the people, not in parliament. In a few years this sovereign power will pass into your hands, and you and others of your age will be responsible for its exercise. You will determine the future of Canada.

I am sure we all recognize that the success of a democracy like ours depends upon the intelligence, integrity and public spirit of its citizens. We expect this public spirit in time of war. But do we expect it in times of peace? Are we not in danger of forgetting that every citizen owes a duty to the state, which he should discharge with the same fidelity in peace as in war, a duty which calls for a practical and unselfish interest in public affairs, and which cannot be neglected without loss and prejudice to the state?

You are all deeply interested in the future of Canada. It is your country and will be the country of your children and your children's children. May I commend to your earnest consideration five national ideals or objectives which we should keep before us. They are not only ideals, but they are present, urgent, practical problems, problems requiring immediate attention but which will not be solved in a day or a year or a decade, and you may make a most valuable contribution toward their solution.

1. The development and maintenance of a truly Canadian national spirit as against sectionalism, whether geographical, racial, religious or occupational.

2. The development and maintenance, on a just and equitable basis, of cooperative relations between capital and labor as against class domination or class conflict.

3. The development of our constitutional relations as one of the free self-governing sovereign states of the British Commonwealth, so that we may maintain on the one hand the freedom necessary to full national development and on the other the unity essential for the welfare and security of the Commonwealth as a whole.

4. The development and maintenance of a good understanding between the British Commonwealth and the United States, so that the Anglo-Saxon nations may work together in furthering the ideals of peace, justice and ordered liberty upon the realization of which the future of our present civilization so largely depends.

5. The development and maintenance of an intelligent interest in international affairs, and the whole-hearted support of the League of Nations as the most hopeful and practical experimentation so far devised for providing a substitute for war as a means of settling international disputes.

No one can seriously consider our geographical position, our political affiliations, the extent and variety of our resources and the character and ideals of our people without realizing that Canada is called to a high and noble destiny. Will Canada realize that destiny? The answer is in the hands of the young men and young women of Canada—particularly of those who are privileged to enjoy the training which fits them for positions of leadership. Will our educational institutions provide the intelligent, honest, unselfish and public spirit of leadership our country's position so urgently demands? I leave that question with you.

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Washington, D.C., August 14, 1920

MR. GEO. V. FERGUSON, Editor-in-Chief,  
The "GATEWAY", University of Alberta,  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

DEAR SIR:—

In reply to your letter of July 29th, asking for some message to the students of your University to be delivered through the columns of the "Gateway", permit me to say that I regret very much that time does not permit me to prepare something in the way of a special article for you. Allow me, however, to express the hope to the student body of the University of Alberta that the years spent in that institution may leave each student better fitted to meet the trials and struggles of life, better able to understand the problems of the great masses of the people and better fitted to render service in their behalf. The Labor Movement teaches that the greatest ideal in life is service to humanity. Opportunities without limit will unveil themselves to the generation now approaching the responsibilities of manhood and womanhood. The world is in need of every constructive thought and in need of every genuinely helpful effort that can be contributed by earnest men and women. My hope is that your University may be in the fullest degree productive of the desire and the ability to be of service to the race.

Very truly yours,

SAM. GOMPERS, President,  
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## SCHOOL HOWLERS

Another collection of schoolboy "howlers" is printed by "The University Correspondent," which offered a prize for the best series of twelve amusing mistakes. The following were classified under the heading of History, Geography, Grammar and Literature:—

William ordered his archers to shoot at the thickest part of the English, so they shot upwards so that the arrows might fall on the Englishmen's heads.

Sir Walter Scott wrote Quentin Durward, Ivanhoe, and Emulsion.

Lord Macaulay suffered from gout, and wrote all his poems in iambic feet.

Many ships use Calcutta as a coaling station—hence the term "Black Hole of Calcutta."

Charles II told the people they could get drunk or gamble or do what they liked. This was called the Restoration.

The cold at the North Pole is so great that the towns there are not inhabited.

Magna Charta said that the king was not to order taxis without the consent of Parliament.

The Pope called Henry VIII. "Fido the Offensive."

Simon de Montfort was a true Englishman because he fought against the king and put him in prison.

The Pilgrim Fathers were the men who went to worship at Becket's shrine in Canterbury.

The Duke of Marlborough was a great general who always commenced a battle with the fixed determination to win or loose.

The Fire of London did a great deal of good. It purified the city from the dregs of the Plague, and burnt down eighty-nine churches.



The following verses from an English newspaper, have a very evident moral, and are well worth repetition :

### ECONOMICS

When wages chase prices,

And prices soar high,

We learn how little

Our money can buy.

For wealth is illusive,

And money takes wings,

And a Bradbury's value

Is just what it brings.

We can't live on paper,

Though paper is rife;

We've all got to work

For the good things in life.

A fat wad of crinkly

Bank notes in your wallet

Is no good unless

It buys food for your gullet.

Suppose Smith makes clothing,

And Jones turns out boots,

Then Smith needs Jones' footwear,

As Jones needs Smith's suits.

Though with printed money

Their pockets bulge out,

Unless both keep working

They both go without.

The Dane sends us butter,

The Yank sends us grain,

We must manufacture

For both Yank and Dane.

So let's get our coats off—

We can't all be dudes,

To bring down high prices,

Deliver the Goods.

CHAS. NESS.



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Some Thoughts on Educational  
Reform in Canada

(Continued from page 7)

order we must "gain the necessary poise, the scientific, historical and psychological knowledge that will make our meddling safe." In Canada this reconstruction will be the more difficult, because it is to be accompanied by rapid expansion. To this task we must set ourselves with all the mental and moral and physical energy available and the task for Canadian educators is to devise more and more adequate agencies, more and more efficient educational factories, from which we can turn out men and women who can think "in terms of the whole of society; not merely in terms of political ascendancy and commercial and industrial expansion—but in terms of life."

EARLE D. MacPHEE,  
Department of Psychology  
and Education,  
Acadia University.

The Simple Soldier Buried in  
Westminster Abbey.

His spirit slept,  
While o'er that poor proud clay  
That once was his,  
The grasses swept.

His spirit stirred;  
The hearts of men who in the fray  
With him had fought,  
The voices heard.

His spirit rose.  
For now that rich proud clay  
That still is his,  
Threw off its woes.

His spirit lives.  
Midst Abbey walls his dust will stay  
With those he loves—  
What peace it gives.



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